

Introduction to Policies and Strategies for Digital Government Minitrack

Frank Bannister
Trinity College Dublin
Frank.Bannister@tcd.ie

Antonio Cordella
London School of Economics
and Political Science
a.cordella@lse.ac.uk

Kyung Ryul Park
Graduate School of Science
and Technology Policy
Korea Advanced Institute
of Science and Technology
Park.kr@KAIST.ac.kr

There was a good response to the call for papers for the minitrack this year. Four papers were selected following some close decision making. All of the papers are about, in one way or another, developing countries. One takes a global perspective; the other three explore developments in specific countries. Collectively (and this is something that is serendipitous rather than being planned) they make for a particularly coherent session.

The first paper, which in a way sets the scene, is by Yinka Oyerinde and Felix Olu Bankole and is a broad exploration of the impact of government ICT in developing countries (ICT4D). Using data from the United Nations and applying Habermas's Theory of Communicative Action, the authors look at the impact of ICT on human development and conclude that there is good evidence of positive outcomes and creation of real public social value.

The second contribution continues with the same theme, but this time at the opposite end of the spectrum, the micro level of a single, small developing country, Timor-Leste. The authors, Abel da Silva and Walter Fernandez, use three case studies to examine strategies that can help such countries to use donor funding to deliver sustainable human development.

Continuing the same theme, but in a very different context, Glauco Pedrosa, Vitor Menezes and Rejane Figueiredo present the results of a large scale study in Brazil and the resulting Brazil Quality Management

model that evolved out of their research. Amongst other things, this model enables users to identify best practices and it can be adapted to different areas of the public sphere.

The fourth paper, while also set in a developing country, examines a different but familiar phenomenon – that of escalating commitment, especially the tendency, to use a colloquial expression, to throw good money after bad in public ICT projects. The authors, Muhammad Priandi, Walter Fernandez and M.S. Sandeep propose the concept of “perseverance of commitment” and show how an understanding of this can, in the right circumstances, enable actors to convert failing projects into successful ones.

Finally, on a personal note, I would like to thank my two co-chairs Antonio Cordella, with whom I have worked for a number of years, and Kyung Ryul Park who joined the team this year. I could not have asked for more helpful and supportive colleagues with whom to work. This is my final year as a co-chair of this minitrack. The number of submissions to the mini track continues to be healthy and I am happy to exit on a high note. It has been a privilege to be a both mini-track co-chair and chair.